

MEDICINE SONGS OF GEORGE FARMER

By

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## MEDICINE SONGS OF GEORGE FARMER<sup>1</sup>

BY ALBERT B. REAGAN

WHILE doing research work among the Bois Fort Indians of Minnesota when I was Indian Agent at Nett Lake in that state one of my Indian policemen was a medicine man by the name of George Farmer Ne-ba-day-ke-shi-go-kay. He was a man of influence among his people. He also had a sufficient knowledge of his language, to be able to write down his thoughts in "Chippewa," though he had never been to any school so far as could be learned.

Once when at his place I accidentally discovered that he had a large note book. His little daughter gave it to me, and on opening it I saw writing in it, but in a language I did not recognize. After a good deal of persuasion, I succeeded in getting him to translate the words, when to my surprise I found that the writing consisted of medicine songs and medicinal receipts.<sup>2</sup>

These were written in Roman script but with phonetic values similar to French. Mr. Farmer let me copy his notes. The copy of his writing is in the first line and below this is the direct translation of each word that is translatable. The words "to-o," "ho-wo-he," "we-he," and many others are just thrown-in words and do not admit of being translated. Stars indicate places where there are lengthy pauses in the song and dashes where short pauses occur. The word written "mite" is the same as the "mide," found elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the orthography of the Indian words cited in this paper does not take into consideration phonetic niceties. Thus true lenes surd stops are not distinguished from sonant stops, nor are 'p, 't, 'k from p, t, k respectively. It seems likely that terminally sonant stops are aspirated but have a corresponding surd as a glide. True sonant stops do not exist after sibilants; and it is not likely that true surds exist after the consonants n, ñ, m. Possibly, to judge by the Gull Lake dialect, other peculiarities exist.—Truman Michelson.

<sup>2</sup> The medicinal receipts were published under the title "Some Chippewa Medicinal Receipts," in the *American Anthropologist* (N.S.), vol. 23, 1921, pp. 246-249.

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## THE MEDICINE SONGS

Song 1: As Written in George Farmer's Notebook

## KAGIWEIASH OGHGABEWI SI MI TEWIG

Bemi kweinan shi madagwanina  
 Mi kana misiwe bemi kaweian  
 Mi-si-we o tenag babigotenag  
 Ni bawiog mi mi gi himag kashi ka wit  
*Mego nawag*  
 Ni ni wa ni bawida bebi nawag  
*Ni te mosabebi nawog*  
 Wi-da ni-nee nish inini wog o *nabiwog*  
*Edanabiiian*  
 Ano djimo a ni gi wi newa ni kan  
*Nani gedji no dji mo a qwi mo ki ia ne*  
 Ei nawemo iane anish mi te  
 Nai ni ni wag nani hi teshg awag  
 Ni-te-mo sa  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Sagi si i tig wi ko tig  
 Ialiaama wanai temasa ki to bwa  
 Kane ki to nagane

Song 1: Kagiweiash Ochigabewisimitewig

(O. B. Johnson's Medicine Dance Song)

1. Be-mi-ka-we-i-nan shi-ma-da-gwa-ni-na  
 I see a bear track *or* a track bear

*Explanation:* The above is sung by those who are walking around inside of the Grand Medicine Lodge, and they go through the motions of looking for the bear track, dancing around the hall in a half stooped-over position.

- |                 |                           |                      |
|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 2. Ni-ka-na     | mi-si-we                  | be-mi-ka-we-ian      |
| put presents on | center line in dance hall | big ducks track seen |
| Mi-si-we        | o-te-nag                  | ba-bi-go-te-nag      |
| big ducks       | town                      | bad rocks            |

*Free translation:* Put the presents [to the gods] on the center line of the dance hall, as we have seen the tracks of the great northern loon (big ducks). The big ducks [are soaring around]. They see the rocks all around the town.

- |                |                 |              |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 3. Ni-ba-wi-og | ni-mi-gi-si-mag | kashi-ko-wit | me-go-na-wag    |
| Somebody       | my shells       | today        | somebody shoots |
| standing       |                 |              |                 |

*Free translation:* Somebody (some one of the medicine actors) standing up, "shoots" my medicine shells [for my benefit] today.

(It is believed that the konapamik shell, the sacred emblem of the Grand Medicine Lodge, is to be swallowed by the medicine man and then by the power of these shells (magic influence) he can "shoot" into the candidate's heart the mysterious power and influence contained in his medicine bag.)

- |            |             |            |                |               |
|------------|-------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| 4. Ni-niwa | nibawida    | be-binawag | nitemosa       | be-bi-na-wag  |
| man        | standing up | shoots the | partner friend | shoots shells |
|            |             | shells     |                |               |

*Free translation:* A man standing up [in the lodge] "shoots" the shells [into the heart] of my partner; [he] "shoots" the shells. (It might also mean: A man, standing up, "shoots" the shells. My friend "shoots" the shells.)

- |              |               |           |                 |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 5. Widaninee | nish ininiwag | ona-biwag | eda-na-bi-ie-an |
| have lots of | two men       | sit down  | bed             |
| things       |               |           |                 |

*Free translation:* Two men who have lots of things sit down on a bed or mat.

- |                           |                        |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 6. A-no-dji-mo-a          | ni-gi-wi-ne-dwa        | ni-kan           |
| somebody's brother        | shoot the shells, sick | partner          |
| Na-ni-ge-dji              | no-dji-mo-a            | e-wi-mo-ki-ia-ne |
| somebody saw him on the   | someone falls down on  | somebody sings   |
| other side of his brother | his side and gets up   |                  |
|                           | again                  |                  |

*Free translation:* My partner whom you see on the other side of the sick brother "shoots" the shells into him (the candidate), as he falls down and gets up again, as somebody sings. (This stanza illustrates the action of the candidate, falling down when he is "shot" by the medicine man; the magic influence of the medicine bag being "shot" into his heart, and being too powerful for him to bear, he becomes unconscious. Such a scene as is here described can be seen at any medicine lodge dance. The person who falls down in a pretended unconsciousness is said to be sick.)

- |                        |                     |            |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 7. E-gi-na-we-mo-ia-ne | an-ish-mi-te        |            |
| somebody sang          | I guess dancing     |            |
| Wai-ni-ni-wag          | na-ni-bitesh-gowag  | ni-te-mo-a |
| man                    | dancing all walking | partner    |
|                        | to town             |            |

*Free translation:* As somebody sings there is dancing; everybody dancing walks to town with my partner. *Or:* Somebody sings and there is dancing and everybody, dancing, walks to town with my partner (the person being initiated).

- |                        |                     |            |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| 8. Sagisjtigwikotig    | Yahla(h) ah(h)ahmah | aniatemasa |
| somebody shoots shells | at wigwam           | partner    |
| Ki-t-bwa-ka-na         | ki-to-na-ga-ne      |            |
| five                   | plates              |            |

*Free translation:* Somebody (the medicine man) "shoots" the shells [in a "medicine" way] at the wigwam of my partner (the person being initiated) and [he prepares] five plates [for the chief medicine men, i.e., five dishes of eatables].

Song 2: As Recorded in the Notebook

ENAGAMI GI NAG MI TE NAGAMON

Manito ino nanawagamig  
 Na-na-wik-ish-go-ke manito *wiko*  
 Biei-na bi-wake dji gwe-wa-ge  
*Ki-i-e-i-na* bi-wake ms ki-ia-ne  
 Na-na-wa-ga-mig we dji ms-ki-iane  
 Na-na-wi-ki-shig we dji ms-ki-iane  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Awena—*ke-wi-a-woge* ki hinan  
 Awena—*ke-wi-a-woge* dji kwewoke  
 Ni-kani wi te  
*Ni kani i ko o*  
 Dji-bi sasagadji we adaki mi to ke  
*Mada ni kishi ko mina to ke*  
 Nano deia ko we wake edashit  
*Mitewa* wewigani magwa  
 Wi a mwake dawi amwake  
*Megwe kamig* nani bawigwen  
 Kisig i nato dane ni kan *kiwidakamige*  
*Kana wabami te*  
 Waban ni bi tsne ni kan  
 Baiawage badamwewi daman  
 Kaogi na manito.

Song 2: E-na-ga-mi-gi-nag mi-te na-ga-mon

(Anahkahmegenung's Medicine Lodge Song)

1. Manito	ino	nanawagamig	nanawikishigoke	nimatowike
God	is	over all islands	over the heaven	[is] God (?)

*Free translation:* God is over the heaven and the earth. (It is hard to translate this. Na-na-mi-ga-mig is the "muskeg" (peat) in the swamps rising up out of the water, a sort of floating peat, the Indians believing that the land surface of the earth is a floating muskeg—"lots of islands on the surface of the big ocean." They base their belief on the fact that a piece of muskeg will tear loose from the bottom of the shallow lakes in that northern country and float around bearing upon it quite a bit of vegetation, even small trees. I have used such floating islands as concealments in the fall when hunting ducks on Nett Lake. I could hide among the rushes and sunflower like weeds and, putting my decoys in the clear water adjacent, could shoot ducks from that concealment as they settled on the water among them; but I had to be careful lest my island sink under my weight and leave me in the water. Na-na-wa-ga-mig also means "all over the country are big

islands," i.e., it is the earth (the middle of the universe). The Indians believe that the visible universe is composed of two plate-like parts; the sky is the upper "plate," the earth the lower "plate." They call the earth the lower middle of the universe, the sky the upper middle of the universe. They also believe that we live in the center of the upper (or land) part of the "earth-plate" and that the sky directly above us, "the visible sky," is the center of the "sky-plate." Nah-nah-we-ke-shig-oke is "the center of the "sky-plate.")

- |  |                        |   |
|--|------------------------|---|
| 2. Bioina-bi-wake<br>the thunderbird             |                        | dji-gwe-wa-ge<br>thunders                 |
| Ki-ie-i-na<br>look see                           | bi-wake<br>the islands | mo-ki-ia-ne<br>grow up [out of the water] |
| 3. Na-na-wa-ga-mig<br>from the middle of the sky |                        | we-dji-mo-ki-ia-ne<br>we come down        |

*Free translation:* From the center of the earth, the land surface of the earth, the big island grows up and from the center of the earth-plate we come up. From the middle of the sky-plate in the starry vault we come down.

- |   |                       |                               |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 4. A-we-na<br>who                                 | ke-wi-a-wage<br>uses  | ki-bi-nan<br>medicine shells? |
| A-we-na<br>who                                    | ke-wi-a-wa-ge<br>uses | dji-kwe-wa-ke<br>the thunder? |
| 5. Ni-kane-we-te<br>the head walker in the dance. |                       |                               |

Ni-kani-i-ho o

(the head walker in the medicine dance, the leading man, the person who leads or heads the dancing column in the Grand Medicine Lodge dance ceremonies.)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 6. Dji-bi-sa-sa-ga-dji-we<br>the daylight |  | a-da-ki-mi-to-ke<br>comes upon the earth |
| Ma-da-ni-kish-i-ko<br>sky                 |  | mi-na-to-ke<br>God                       |

*Free translation:* The daylight in fringed rays comes upon the earth and when the sun gets a little higher the sky clears (i.e., darkness is gone, darkness goes when the sun gets brighter).

- |   |  |                                    |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| 7. Na-no-de-ia-ko-we-wake<br>there not much |  | wa-ke-e-da-shit<br>talking         |
| Mi-te-wa<br>medicine men                    |  | we-wi-ga-ni-ma-gwa<br>our brethren |

*Free translation:* There is not much talking. The medicine men are our friends or brethren." (The whole stanza seems to mean: Every one is too tired from dancing to talk much; but all the medicine men are our friends.)







*Free translation:* Somebody tells me about somebody getting old. I see a pretty old man.

Song 5: Mite Nagamon (Medicine Dance Singing)

1. Be-mi-ka-we-i-na-ne                      shi-ma-da-gwa  
see track                                      bear

2. Shi-ma-da-gwa<sup>3</sup>                              ni-to-ga-wi-a  
bear    I see track

*Free translation:* I see the bear track.

3. N-ga-na                                      ni-wa-ni-no-se                              wi-ki-wa-mik  
friend    walking around [in]                              medicine lodge wigwam

Ish-gwa-teg                                      ni-wa-ne-no-se  
in the door of the lodge                              walking around

*Free translation:* They are walking around the brother (friend) who is being initiated in the medicine lodge wigwam. They are walking around him in the door of the lodge. (This is the scene of the dancing actors dancing around a novitiate.)

4. I-we-da-bi-ma                                      ki-to-bwa-ka-ne  
set (or lay) down                                      pipe

I-wi-da-bi-dan                                      ki-to-na-ga-ne  
set down    dishes of eatables (or dishes to eat in)

*Free translation:* Put down the pipe. Set down the dishes [in the place designated]. (The dishes are such as are used to contain certain eatables at the medicine dances. The scene indicated by this stanza is the preparatory ceremony to the feasting part of the medicine ceremonies.)

5. Ki-shi-gwi-bi-nan                                      ki-wa-wi-da-mo-ne  
sky    I ask

Ki-dji-sa-ki-ma                                      ki-wa-wi-da-mo-ne  
sky    I ask

*Free translation:* I make supplication to the sky. I make supplication to the sky.

\*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

6. Wa-ba-ma-ga-ne                                      shimadagwanino                                      inemadabit  
see    bear    sit down

*Free translation:* A bear skin is exhibited, sitting down.

7. We-na-go-da-wi-ian                                      ti-bish-go-kam-ig  
set snare    in sky

O-mi-te                                      manito                                      ti-bish-go-ki-shig                                      me-ma-to-bit  
medicine                                      god                                      middle sky                                      sat down

<sup>3</sup> The *g* in *gwa* has almost the sound of *q*.

*Free translation:* The medicine god [of the middle of the day] made a snare in the sky and sat down in the middle of the sky.

8. Ia-ni-ka-na	shi-ma-da-gwa	be-mo-set
my brother	bear	walking
Mi-ka-nag	mi-si-se	bi-mo-se
road	turkey	walking
		mi-ka-nag
		road

*Free translation:* My brother, the bear, is walking the road; the turkey is walking the road. (This probably refers to some drawing on a birch bark parchment.)

9. A-ni-da	e-bi-na-wi-iane	shi-ma-da-gwa
what you say	shoot me	bear
Ki-ma-ga-te-wi	te-na-ni-we	ki-wa-ki-te-na-ni-we
black	tongue	crooked

*Free translation:* What do you say? The black bear with the crooked tongue is going to "shoot" me [with the medicine shells]. (I have seen acts in the medicine lodge ceremonies in which a black bear skin with long tongue extending out of the mouth was pointed toward non-dancers by the dance-actors in the ceremonies as they passed by the same in their forward movement. And this stanza probably refers to such an act.)

10. Odji-ie-to-ian	wi-ia-i	ki-mi-sho-mi-si-nan
I set	(no meaning)	girl's grandfather's
O-ma-ki-sin	ani-ie-to-ian	ni-ka-da-mo-wan
moccasin	I set it	I am afraid

*Free translation:* I place the girl's moccasin [as you suggest]. I set it down, because I am afraid.

#### Song 6: Sa-gi-man-a-ki-ka-mon (Drum Singing)

1. Ka-wa-bi-kwe-hi-wat	ma-ni-tok
white haired	god
Ish-a-we-ni-mi-kok	ti-bish-ko-kamik
gives medicine by a kiss (touch-mouth process)	middle place
Ki-wi-da-ka-mik	
all around the earth	

*Free translation:* The white haired god, wherever he meets him in the middle of the earth space or all around the earth (everywhere), gives him medicinal powers (*literally* medicine) with a kiss.

2. Ish-a-we-ni-mi-kog	ni-kane	ti-bish-go-ka-mig
give him medicine	my friend	middle place
by a kiss		
Ke-kibwa-ganawat	niti-nemikog	kegina-kogane-wat
has pipe	full of tobacco	has dishes

*Free translation:* My friend, he who gave him medicine by a kiss in the middle of the earth place, has a pipe full of tobacco. He also has some dishes.

3. A-be-bi-na just now	bi-si-daw some one is talking (who's talking?)	ka-ia-gi-ki-to-wat that talking	
O-ko-we here	mi-te-wag medicine man	we-we-ni-sa a little close like whispering in the ear	bi-si-daw who's that
Ki-ia-gi-te-wat talking		ki-wi-da-ba-mig all country around	

*Free translation:* Who is that talking just now—a little close as if whispering in the medicine man's ear? Who is talking everywhere?

4. E-go-bi about ten sit down in a long circle	wa-hwen in a long circle	o-go-we here	manitog gods
Ki-ne-ia-bi-ka-ti-nag Mesabe Ranges (of mountains)			

Wegwebiioote in a long line	waiagwakidjikaming Lake Superior	mi-te-wag medicine men
--------------------------------	-------------------------------------	---------------------------

*Free translation:* About ten gods of the Mesabe Range are sitting down here in a circle; the medicine men of Lake Superior are sitting down here in a long line.

5. Ka-ie-min too, me	nina-ga-mo-i-go sing	ni-kan my brother
Ni-bi-shi-gwa-na-nig at long point at Leech Lake	e-bit living	ma-ni-to god
Ba-bi-gwa-wa-kag Leech Lake		ni-na me

*Free translation:* My brother, I, too, have sung at Long Point at Leech Lake (Onigum, Minnesota). The god of life also sang at Leech Lake with me.

6. Ka-bi-ma-ni-gwe-ko-mo-ian long hair (of the god, referring to the white choppy waves)
---

Mi-sha-wi-ki-dji-kam Lake Superior	I-ba-na-be (name of a god)
E-ko-ian is my name	ka-wa-da-ni-gwe-ko-mo- kaish-gwe-kameg ian long white hair hanging Lake Superior down the back

*Free translation:* I am the long white hair of Lake Superior (i.e., the white, choppy waves of Lake Superior). Ibanabe is my name. I am the long white hair hanging down the back of Lake Superior.

7. Mi-edo	ma-ni-tog	o-ke-we	wa-ia-ko-no-we-wat
one	god	here (this)	crooked tail
Miedo	ma-ni-tog	okowe	ke-mi-we-no-we-
one	god	here	wat long tail

*Free translation:* There is one manido here with a crooked tail; there is also one god here with a long tail.

8. A-ia-gwa-mi-na-ne	ka-gi-wi-da-mo-nan
you hold (like holding a piece of money)	I ask you

O-o-we	bi-wa-big	ni-ka-ne	o-na-man
this (here)	iron (trap)	my friend	iron trap

Ka-gi-wi-da-mo-nan  
I ask you

*Free translation:* I ask you [about] this iron [trap], my friend. My friend, I ask you about this iron trap. [Does it hold things as] you hold a piece of money? (The medicine man had probably brought a trap back with him on his return from the journey this poem is describing.)

9. Ni-sho-ka-mig	e-da	ni-ga-bi-ti-ke
medicine wigwams	two	go in

Ni-sho-ka-mig	e-da	ni-ga-bi-ti-ke
medicine wigwams	two	go in

I-da-wi-na  
both sides

o-wi-bi-ia-ne  
[have] shells [suspended on both sides]

Ka-ga-wa-ia  
porcupine quills

o-wi-bi-ia-ne  
shells

*Free translation:* There are two going into the medicine wigwam. Two are going into the medicine wigwam. They have shells suspended on both sides, also porcupine [quill] shells.

Ba-si-gwi-wai-ka-nan	o-now
singing medicine dance	last two

*Free translation:* The last two are singing a medicine dance song.

Song 7: Madjishgog Mite Nagamon  
(John Johnson's Medicine Song)

1. We-we-ni	no-da-wi-ia-ne	se-se-ga-dag
easy	sighing	spruce trees

Shi-ma-da-gwa-ni-no  
bear singing

wa-ha-mi-ia-ne  
see me

*Free translation:* Among the easy sighing spruce trees, the singing bear sees me.

2. Ia o-mi-gwa-ni-ia	shi-ma-da-gwa
feather	bear

O-mi-kwa-ni-to  
feather, like a goose feather

*Free translation:* The bear has a feather, a feather like a goose feather.

3. A-ni-wa-ba-ton	ba-i-no-se-ia-ne	shi-ma-da-goke
I wait until daylight	walking	bear

4. Bi-mo-se-ian	shi-ma-da-gog	bi-i-no-si-ian
walking	bear	down this way

O-ki-ma-win	man-e-to-wa-ne
chief	god

*Free translation:* I wait until daylight for the walking bear. The principal bear god is walking down this way.

5. Kah-ie-min	agi	ni-wa-ba-dan
to me	all over	see

Ka-ie-min	ba-dja-gwin	a-ki-tin
to me	men's privates	woman's privates

6. Ma-ni-to-wi	od-ji-da-sa	o-ma-ga-gi
god	sit down	frog

Na-ma-da-bi	ki-ia-wik
sit down	shoulders (hips)

*Free translation:* The frog manido sits down (or sat down). He sat down on his folded hind feet (hips).

7. Mi-ka-na-ke	sha-we-ni-mi-wat	mi-te-wa-ke
my [real] friend	gives goods to me	medicine man

Ba-gi-dji-kan	sha-we-ni-mi-wat	mi-te-wa-ke
blankets, calico, etc.	gives to me	medicine man

*Free translation:* My friend (brother in the lodge), I give the goods to the medicine man. I give blankets, calico, etc., to the medicine man.

8. Ma-dji-io-te	ki-bi-nan	ki-ia-wik
walking with all	shells	shoulders
over breast		

A-ia-go-ki	ki-bi-nan	ki-ia-wik
pressing down weight	shells	shoulders

*Free translation:* He was walking with shells all over his breast and shoulders. The shells press[ed] down the shoulders with their weight.

9. Me-te-we-ia-dji-wag	ki-dji-ka-mi-we
hear waves, yellow floating	Lake Superior



*Free translation:* My close friend, the shells to cure the sick are flying from me to you.

- |              |             |           |                     |
|--------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------|
| 7. Ka-ie-win | ba-ba-mi-se | ka-ie-win | da-ki-wi-se         |
| me to you    | flying      | me to you | like shaking shells |

*Free translation:* They are flying from me to you. They are flying from me to you like shaking shells. (The shells are being "shot" from me to you and shake as they are "shot," or are in the act of being "shot.")

8. Bi-mi-shi-mo-dji-keg  
carrying blankets in the final dancing act

*Free translation:* They are carrying blankets in the final dancing act.

9. (an added stanza).

A-ni-da-ia-ni-ne	we-mi-ti-gosh-i-gwag
he got it	the white man
O-mo-ti-da-ka-mi-wa	o-da-to-ba-ni-wa
calico	pails

*Free translation:* He has the white man's calico and pails [for presents].

Song 9: Mi-te Na-ga-mon (Grand Medicine Song)

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Sha-we-ni-mi-ia-ne                                    | ni-kan                     |
| fondling as a mother does her child                      | my brother                 |
| Ka-ba-ki-te-nan  | min-wa-ba-mi-gwen          |
| raised up wigwam (or lifting up the flap<br>of the door) | look good, see me          |
| Ni-kan   | ka-ba-gi-te-nan            |
| my friend  | raised up wigwam door flap |

*Free translation:* When I raised up the door flap of the wigwam, my friend made love to me in the most loving way. As I raised up the door flap to the wigwam my sweetheart looked pleasant to me (i.e., bade me welcome by her pleasant looks).

- |                |           |                 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 2. Ka-ie-nin   | ko-da     | a-mi-shi-mi-sa  |
| too, me        | I suppose | my close friend |
| Ki-da-wa-ba-ma | ka-ie-min |                 |
| see            | me, too   |                 |

*Free translation:* Me, too, my close friend, I am looking for you. Me, too, my friend, I am looking for you. (But the Indian puts it: "I suppose that I, too, my close friend, I am looking for you." This is the comer's statement on raising the door flap. The answer is: "I suppose that I, too, my friend, I am looking for you.")

- |               |               |          |
|---------------|---------------|----------|
| 3. A-wi-ka-ne | shi-ma-da-gwa | o-ka-tig |
| sore bone     | bear          | leg      |
| A-wi-ka-ne    | shi-ma-da-gwa | o-to-mig |
| sore bone     | bear          | mouth    |



*Free translation:* Hold me tight. I guess somebody pulled his mouth to one side by putting his finger in one side (corner) of it and pulling it out.

4. Ish-a-wa-ni-mig           ba-bi-gwa-wa-kag           ebi-gwen  
like kissing him           Lake of the Woods           living

Man-i-to           we-dji-wi-ko-dji-wag    ebi-gwen    manito  
god                source of river           living        god

*Free translation:* The Lake of the Woods is a living god; the source of the river in a lake (the intake of a river from a lake) is a living god. It is as if these were making love to him.

5. I-ta-wa-ka-mig

the surface of the top of the earth and the surface below the earth

Ni-no-da-ko-dag                           O-mi-shi-ma-gi-na-go  
must be hearing me                       (a god's name)

*Free translation:* Omishimaginago, the god of the surface of the top of the earth and the surface below the earth, must be hearing me. (The Indians believe the earth to be flat or pancake-like in shape with an upper and lower surface. Some Indians also believe the earth to be composed of apartments, one above another, the floor of each apartment being like the surface of the world upon which we live.)

6. A-no-ka-ie    nin                           kash-a-we-ni    nin  
too              me                           kissing           me

We-na-gwe-shig                           ka-sho-we-ni-mag  
in the evening                           I am kissing you

*Free translation:* Me, too, you are kissing in the evening. I [too] am kissing you. (You are making love to me and I am making love to you.)

7. Ka-ia-ki-gi-to-ian                       da-she-mag  
I am talking                           about him

A-we-si                                       we-na-na-gwi-shig  
animals                                   tonight

*Free translation:* I am talking about him to the animals tonight.

8. Be-ba-mi-dji-wa-ge                       ni-kat-ed-a-mon  
flooding everywhere river downward    talking

Da-bi-kwe-gi-dji-wan  
[as it] recedes

*Free translation:* The everywhere flooding river as it rises is talking as it recedes.

#### Song 11: Kaish Mite Nagamon (Kaish's Medicine Song)

1. Na-si-gan           na-sigan           mite           wi-gan  
going walking    going walking    medicine    wigwam

*Free translation:* He is going walking, walking to the medicine lodge wigwam. (This is sung of some object on a medicine scroll. True, the song



3. A-o-wi-ka-ne bone	Ba-ga-mo (name of a god)	ni-ka-ne brother
A-o-ka-te leg		wi-ka-ne bone

*Free translation:* This is the bone of Bagamo, brother, the leg bone.

4. Wi-a-ia-dji-mi-go-si-ian talking about to me		na-go-da-mok asks me
Manitog God	wa-bi-she speaks	shi-wa Martin
		e-ko-ian my name

*Free translation:* God speaks to me and asks me if Martin is my name.

5. We-go-ne ke-gwe-dji-i-na-ian-e what is it I shall give		mi-te-wi-win medicine dance
Ma-ni-to-wan god	ni-kan my friend	ge-gwe-i-ian-e shall be initiated

*Free translation:* What is it I shall give the medicine dance god, my friend, [if] I shall be initiated [into the lodge]? Or what is it I shall give the medicine dance god [as a present], my friend (or brother), if I try to be initiated [into the lodge]? (The inquirer here wishes to know how many presents he must put on the "medicine line" that is stretched through the center of the lodge so that he may be admitted into the degree which he seeks to take.)

6. Ma-ni-to-wan god	i-no-se-ia-ne walking	o-kwe-kan sweat house
Ma-ni-to-wan god	bi-mo-se-ian walking	a-gik ground

*Free translation:* The god is walking to the sweat house. The god is walking on the ground.

Song 13: Ma-djish-gag (Mahjishkung) Mite Nagamon  
(John Johnson, Grand Medicine Song)

1. Be-mi-ka-we-ian-ne see track	shi-ma-da-gwa bear	ni-na me
Eshi-ga-we-i-nan I see, look track	i-ko-dji somewhere	wa-go-sha fox

*Free translation:* I saw a bear track. I also looked and saw a fox track somewhere.

2. Ni-kan-a my friend	ba-bi-ko-te-nag town	bi-mi-ga-we-ian see track
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*Free translation:* I see a track in the town.

3. Ni-ba-wiag stand up	ni-mi-ki-si-nag medicine shells (my)	ka-shi-ko-wit today
---------------------------	---	------------------------

Me-ni-to-wit  
god

*Free translation:* Stand up today with the medicine shells of the god[s].

4. I-ni-ni-wa                      ni-ba-wa-tog                      me-go-na-wag  
man                                  standing up                      shooting

I-te-mo-sa                      ni-ba-wi-tog                      me-ko-na-wag  
my close friend                      stand up                      shooting

*Free translation:* The man is standing up "shooting" the shells. My close friend is standing up "shooting" the shells.

5. E-gi-no-we-mo-ia-ne              anish                                  mi-te-wi-ni-ne-wa  
good sing                      I guess                                  medicine

Na-ni-bi-tesh-ka-wa-ge                      i-te-mo-sa  
walking around                      my close friend

*Free translation:* I guess my close friend, the medicine man, is singing good [while] walking around.

6. Me-da-ni-ne-e                      ni-sh                                  i-ni-ni-wag  
all kinds of goods                      two                                  men

E-da-na-bi-ian                      i-te-mo-sag                      o-na-bi-wag  
bedroom                      my friend                      sit down

*Free translation:* Two men with all kinds of goods sit down in the bedroom of my friend.

7. Man-i-to                      ba-ba-mi-te                      mi-ti-gog  
God                                  sees                                  trees

O-ma-gwa                                  wa-ba-mi-te  
bear                                  sees

*Free translation:* The Manito sees the trees. The bear sees them.

8. Be-mo-da-keg (This was not sung.)  
talking

9. Wasa                                  ni-bi-ti-na-wah                      ni-kan  
little, far                                  shooting                                  my friend

I-te-mo-sa                                  ni-kan  
my close friend                                  brother [in the lodge]

*Free translation:* From quite a distance my friend, my close friend, is "shooting" my brother [with the shells].

10. Be-shick                      a-wa-ke                      me-mi-to-wit                      ki-bi-nan  
one [more]                      like                      gods                      shells

*Free translation:* There is one more like the god's shell (a shell of the gods).

11. Ma-totok                      na-ishi-na-gwo-ian                      she-ma-to-kog  
sweating                      like me                      bear

Ni-wik a-ni-ie-to-ian                      ki-mi-sho-mi-si-nan  
 four times putting something              grandfather  
 (that's what I put)

O-ni-gi-sin                      ni-ko-da-mo-win                      shi-ma-to-kwa  
 moccasin                      I am afraid                      bear [shooting]

Song 14: Farmer John Sag-im-an-a-ka-mom.  
 (Farmer John's Singing)

1. Weko-ne-ne                      ke-wa-ti-na-ma-wi-ian  
     what is it you say?                      are you trying beating me?

Ki-da-se-ma                      ani-mash-an                      ke-wa-ti-na-mo-wi(n)  
 look at tobacco first              dog                      are you trying beating me?

*Free translation:* What is it you say? Are you trying to beat me? Look at the tobacco first, also the dog. Are you trying to beat me?

2. Ka-ba-ba-mi-dji-wag                      da-ba-ba-mi-dji-wan  
     the flooding and receding river              come back again

*Free translation:* The high waters in the receding river come back again.

3. Wa-ni-se                      wa-dji-wig                      ka-ba-bi-ti-ke-ian  
     hill                      in hill                      he goes in

Mi-si-we                      wa-dji-wik                      ka-ba-bi-ti-ki-an  
 all over                      in hill                      he goes in

*Free translation:* He goes into the hill. All over the hill he goes into it (something like ants going into their ant-hill nests).

4. Ma-no                      ni-kan                      ka-na-na-to-wi-go  
     let it go                      my friend                      it will be all right to doctor a long time

Ma-no                      ni-kan                      wi-ko                      ga-na-nato                      mi-ko  
 let it go                      my friend                      a long time                      to doctor                      a long time

*Free translation:* Let it go, my friend. It will be all right to doctor a long time. Let it go a long time, my friend, and [it will be necessary] to doctor a long time.

5. No-da-wa-ke                      mi-te-wa-ge  
     I am hearing [some]                      medicine men

Ni-wa-ba-ma-ge                      dji-mi-te-wi-wat  
 I am going to see                      the medicine dance

*Free translation:* I hear the medicine men. I am going to see the medicine dance.

6. Ni-wa-gi-shi-gwa-ne                      ni-na                      ani-dje-ni-shi-nabe<sup>5</sup>  
     crooked tails (as of                      me                      is my Indian  
     snakes)

<sup>5</sup> Shi-nabe equals "my" or "ours." Shi-nabi ogema is "our agent."

Iie-dashi-mi-kwen          ni-na          nida-koti-nawa          ni-na  
talking                          me                  trying shooting shells,          me

*Free translation:* Is my Indian talking to me crooked, like the crooked tail of a snake? I will try to "shoot" the medicine lodge shells.

Song 15: Mite Nagamon (Medicine Singing) by Andy Fields

1. Ni-ka-na          bab-i-ko-te-nag          bi-mi-ga          we-iane  
my friend          lots of houses          my tracks          [around] town

*Free translation:* My friend, my tracks are all around the town. (I, as medicine man, visit all the houses.)

2. Ni-wi-wa-na-ne          ni-io-gan                          be-mo-ce-ian-e  
I try                          four nights                          walking

*Free translation:* I was taking medicine-exercises four nights.

3. No-shi-she-i-tok          i-na-gi-nin          mi-ta                  wi-ian  
my son-in-law's          look                  me                  medicine  
child

*Free translation:* My son-in-law's child, look at [the effects of] my medicine [powers], or look at what I can do with my medicine.

4. We-we-ni    mi-te-wi-iane  
easy    my medicine

Ni-mi-no-mi-te-be                                  ko-sho-nin<sup>6</sup>  
my good medicine                                  me

*Free translation:* My medicine dance is easy. My medicine is good. Mine is good medicine.

5. Ia-ia-ni-ne                                  na-na-we-ka-mik                  me-gwa  
dodge from the "shot"          way down somewhere in          bear  
shells                                  the country

No-ni-da-wa                                  na-gwa                          ni-wa-ba-ma  
indications that some one          bear                          see  
is talking off in the thick  
brush

*Free translation:* Down somewhere in the country the bear dodges the "shot" medicine shells. Somewhere in the thick brush (woods) the bear sees indications [that some one is there and] talking.

6. Ia-wi-i-i-ie                                  Ka-gish-gi-si-tot  
(no meaning)                                  Cut Foot

I-gwane    me-te-wi-ian  
my brother    my medicine dance

*Free translation:* Cut Foot, my brother, [that is] my medicine dance (singing).

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<sup>6</sup> *Koshonin* is "me," "my," "mine," usually "mine."

Song 16: Kay-gi-we-iash Sa-gi-ma-na-ga-mon  
(O. M. Johnson's Singing)

1. Ka-bi-si-da-go-man            a-king                    w-ie-na-bit  
my sign is that some one    [the] earth-land        sitting down somewhere  
is talking away off

*Free translation:* By my sign, some one, sitting down somewhere away off on the earth-land, is talking. I see mirrored in the water that some one is sitting down.

2. I-ie-shi-na-gi-wi-o-ian-e            ki-wa-ba-ma  
look at my clothes                    see  
Ni-to-bwa-ka-ne                        i-ie-shi-na-gwi-o-iane  
five smoking pipes                    look at my clothes

*Free translation:* Look at my clothes. Also see five smoking pipes. (Repeated.)

3. Ie-ishi-na-gwi-            ni-kan<sup>7</sup>                    o-ma-gok                    o-te-ig  
oiane  
look at my clothes    my friend            bear                            heart  
Iie-shi-na-gwi-oiane            ni-kan                            otonig  
look at my clothes            my friend                            bear's mouth

*Free translation:* Look at my clothes, my friend. Also look at the bear heart. Look at my clothes, my friend. Also look at the bear's mouth.

4. A-we-gwen                    ni-kish-win                    aia-na-we-da-mo-kwen  
whose that                    fellow                            that's no good see  
Ni-kan                            o-da-na-ki-ba-wa-dan            ni-te-wi-win  
my friend                            good sleep                            medicine dance

*Free translation:* Who is that fellow who is no good? See, my friend, he is having a good sleep at the medicine dance.

5. Winawa                    ni-ti-gok                    ni-ka-nag                    mi-to-win  
this                            [I] ask you                    my friend                    medicine man

*Free translation:* I ask you this, my friend medicine man.

6. Winawa                    nitogok                    nikanag                    nagamon                    nitigok  
this                            I ask you                    my friend                    singing                    I ask, me

*Free translation:* I ask you this, my friend. I ask you, Are you singing for me?

7. A-nin                            e-go-teg                            a-bi-i-ian  
what you say                    how long wigwam                    living

---

<sup>7</sup> One speaker would pronounce this word "ne-kan," another "ne-kahn," and another "ni-kan." The word was pronounced "ne-kahn" by the singer at the time the song was chanted to the author. The same is true of many other words in this article. In one song they may be pronounced one way, and in another quite differently though the spelling of the word is the same. The connecting sounds before and following a word also often modify the initial and terminal sound, or syllable.



*Free translation:* My mouth is like a bear's mouth.

7. Be-mi-ka-we-in-na      shi-ma-da-gwa      esho-ka-we-inan  
see track                      bear                      see track

*Free translation:* I see a bear track. I see the track.

Song 18: E-na-ka-mi-ki-nag Sa-si-ma-na-ga-mon  
(Andy Field's Medicine Singing)

1. Ni-bi-na-se-da-wag  
somebody go see

Metwo-kagi-kito-wate                      osh-ki-na-wa-gig  
talking    middle of the earth

*Free translation:* I hear talking in the middle of the earth. Somebody go and see.

2. Ni-ma-mi-no-ki-sh-we      ni-kan                      nigote                      ekitoian  
good talking                      my friend                      after a while                      talking

*Free translation:* It is good talking. My friend will hear good talking after a while.

3. Wa-ia-se-ia-      ni-bi-we                      we-tinag                      awesi                      manwa  
ga-mig  
pure clear      water                      find                      animals                      bear

*Free translation:* The bear finds pure, clear water for the animals.

4. Ka-gi-dji-wa-nok    wa-wa-ba-mi-ian  
head of the river in the lake (the begin-      sees me  
ning of a river that has its  
source in a lake)

Gish-a-we-ni-min    we-dji-wa-ba-mi-ian  
kisses and fondles me as a mother      it sees me  
does her babe

Mo-ki-dji-wa-nok    wa-wa-ba-mi-ian  
the spring (source of the river)      sees me

5. We-da-ka-mig-o-ke    ki-sho-we-ni-mi-ne  
all over the country you make      over me as a mother makes over her  
babe

We-dji-wa-ba-mi-iane  
you see me

*Free translation:* All over the country when you see me you make over me in a loving way. *Or better:* Everywhere you see me you make love to me.

6. Ne-ba-mi-shi-mo-a-gwa    o-mishi-nia-gi-na-go-gwek  
somebody dancing    goddess of the big mountain

*Free translation:* There is somebody dancing. It is the goddess that lives in the big mountains.

7. Ka-iam-we      oninamawishin      minig      a-wa-si-iag  
 Kaiamwe      gave *or* gives to me      all      animals

*Free translation:* Kaiamwe gave to me (or us) all the animals [for our use]. (Kaiamwe is the name of the god[dess] that lives in the big mountains toward the south from Nett Lake, evidently the Mesabe Range of mountains.)

8. Ne-ia-bi-ka-ti-nag      ba-ba-na-ga-mo-ian  
 Mesabe Range      sings

I-ba-na-be      e-go-ian  
 zenith god (half-way sky god)      my name

- Ne-ia-bi-ka-ti-nag      ba-ba-na-ga-mo-ian      ko-iam-we  
 Mesabe Mountains      sings      zenith god

*Free translation:* The half-way god of the Mesabe Range sings my name. The half-way sky god of the Mesabe mountains sings my name.

Song 19: Enagamiginag Onomanashgwenagamon  
 (Andy Field's Medicine Song)

1. Wi-si-gi-ma-ni-to-wi      ni-sho-ki-ma-ni-to-wi  
 we are your gods      two times you are our gods

2. Ma-ne-do-wi-kam-ig      ado-ta-mi-ke      ni-ki-bi-ti-ke  
 God's medicine house somebody tells me      I go into [the medicine house]

Onamanetowigamig      otodamike      nikibitige  
 god's medicine house      somebody tells me      I get into medicine dance

*Free translation:* Somebody tells me I shall go (or be admitted) into the medicine dance in the god's medicine house. Somebody tells me that I shall get into the god's medicine house in the dance [there], [for] two times [something has said to me], "We are your gods, [and] you are our gods."(?) (The above, includes 1 and 2.)

3. Be-ga-na-bi-te      shi-ma-da-gwa-ni-no      ma-ni-to-wi-gwen  
 there sit;      bear      god

*Free translation:* There sits the bear god. (This the medicine man says as he points to a stuffed bear skin, or to the place in the heavens where the mythical bear god is supposed to dwell.)

4. Ka-gi-dji-o      shi-ma-da-gwa      wi-ki-wa-mig  
 walking slowly because sore      bear      medicine lodge

A-ia-dji-o      she-ma-da-gwa      wi-ki-ma-mig  
 changes his clothes      bear      medicine lodge

*Free translation:* The bear [god] is walking slowly in the medicine lodge because he is sore [from dancing so long]. The bear changes his clothes in the medicine lodge. (After this mock change, the bear actor dances rapidly on the return around the lodge.)

5. Wa-sa      ni-to-ti-na-wa      ki-ga-ni-nan      bo-kot  
 for      I shoot      friends      on this side

*Explanation:* In this act each dancer points his medicine bag toward some looker-on and blows his breath over it toward him (or her) and this one falls down as if struck by some powerful shock from an unseen source. He then gets up and falls in line behind the man who "shot" him and proceeds to "shoot" others. When white people are present, the actor who is "shot" does not usually fall down, but he always dodges as if trying to escape a blow from something, and then falls in line in the dance immediately following the one who "shot" him.

6. Ka-gi-ke mi-nwe-we                      ni-mi-te-wa-ian  
good music                                      shaking music

Ka-gi-ke-mi-mwe-we                      ni-mi-te-wi-gan<sup>8</sup>  
good music                                      shaking music

*Explanation:* The actor is here playing his rattle-drum as he sings this song. The words which he repeats are: "Good music, shaking music."

7. Ke-go-in-oake    ni-kan                      ni-go-dji-mi-te-we    kawabamig  
don't point at    [my] partner              some place              he'll see you

*Free translation:* Do not point [the medicine bag] at my friend (partner), as he will see you. (Meaning the opposite, that he should point it at him and get him to join in the dance.)

8. A-ni-qi-i, bo-ni-ia-ne                      ni-so-ka-mig, bo-ne-iane, wikiwan  
what would happen if I let alone three medicine lodges

*Explanation:* It is difficult to get any meaning out of this stanza. *Boni-iane* (*bone-iane*) is used by these Indians much as we use the word "let"; but the sentence, "What would happen if I let three medicine lodges?" has no meaning. It would seem to mean, "What would happen if I went away from the three medicine lodges?" The next stanza seems to answer this.

9. Eshi-na-gwi-oian                      abosh-ke                      shi-ma-da-gog  
the looks of you                      if you don't care              bear

*Free translation:* (This would seem to mean) If you do not care [more for yourself than that], the looks of you are just like those of a bear (*literally* a female bear).

Song 20: Mite na-ga-mon O-ka-be-ki-shig  
(Medicine Song by All Day)

1. Ni-kan	o-wi-ia-wi-ia-ne	bo-sh-ke
partner	soul	if you care
Ki-ne-bi-kok	o-wa-ko-wat	ni-kan
snake	eggs	partner
		o-wi-ia-i-nane
		soul
Bo-sh-ke	mi-ti-gok	o-wa-ko-wat
if you care	trees	eggs

<sup>8</sup> In the *gi* and the *gan* it is hard to get an English equivalent. The *g* has a sound somewhere between our *g* and *k*.

*Free translation:* If you wish your spirit to increase in power take notice of the increase of a snake from its eggs. My partner, if you wish your soul to increase in power, take notice of the increase of the trees by their seed producing parts. (This stanza is very difficult to translate.)

- |                 |     |   |                  |
|-----------------|-----|---|------------------|
| 2. Gi-wa-ban    | ina | eshi-ian  | ikine-bi-kwa-ian |
| see             | me  | talking   | snake [skin]     |
| Ne-na-bo-wi-ian |     | ne-wa-bi-shi-mok  |                  |
| talk to me      |     | as it is placed in a certain position in<br>the middle of the dancing area on the<br>ground and a person dances upon it |                  |

*Free translation:* See me talking to the snake skin. Also see it talking to me as it is placed in a certain designated position in the middle of the dancing area on the ground and a dancer dances on it. (This represents an act in the dance, or, rather, this scene is acted out in the dance. The snake skin is exhibited by the medicine actor as he sings. In the closing part of the act he usually throws the skin on the ground and dances on it.)

- |                      |                                      |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 3. A-io-wi-bi-mi-na  | wa-ni-te-mo-sa                       |
| shells               | brother                              |
| A-wi-ni-ni           | ni-na-na-to-na-wa                    |
| the man is concealed | you shoot just where you think he is |

*Free translation:* My brother, the man is concealed. You "shoot" the medicine shells where you think he is.

- |  |                |              |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| 4. Ga-ga-wa-ia   | o-wi-bi-mi-na  | ki-ka-ni-nan |
| something like the quills<br>of a porcupine (but imag-<br>inary) | shoot[s]       | brethren     |
| 5. Ki-da-sha-we-ni-nom-ni-mon                                    |                |              |
| 6. Ka-ka-ki  | da-ma-ni-ti-wi |              |
| the crow   | is god         |              |
| Wi-na-ge   | da-ma-ni-to-wi |              |
| the turkey buzzard   | is god         |              |

Song 21: The Ogemah Dance Song of Farmer John,  
Sung by his Son, Ne-be-day-ke-shig-o-kay (George Farmer)

- |                |                      |                               |
|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. ni-ka-gi-na | ni-o-ka-na-gi-mi-kog | manitog (yay-hay'yah-<br>hay) |
| all people     | select               | gods                          |

*Free translation:* The gods select all people.

- |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 2. Ni-ka-gi-na | ni-ki-o-na-gi-mi-kog |
| all people     | select               |
| Manitog        | ki-wi-da-gi-shig-oge |
| gods           | all around the sky   |

*Free translation:* The gods select every one all around the horizon.

E-ie-i-na-bit (no meaning)		yay-hay-yay-hay (no meaning)
3. Mi-si-we-ma-ni-tok all round, gods everywhere	ni-sha-we-ni-mi-kog they love me	Yay-hay-yay-hay
Ka-gi-na all	man-i-tog the gods	ni-sha-we-ni-mi-kog love me

*Free translation:* The gods everywhere love me. (The term "nishaweni-mikog" equals "affection extending to fondling and kissing as a mother does her babe.")

4. Ka-ba-bi-dji-no-wag wind is coming	ki-shi-ke sky	mi-si-we all over
Ki-shi-goge sky	ga-wa-odji-noweg wind is coming	way-hay-way-hay

*Free translation:* The wind is coming from all over the sky; the wind is coming from the sky.

5. Me-twe-nana-go-mi-to is talking to me	awasikishigoge other side of sky	e-bi-gwen somebody
Manito god	yay-hay yay-hay (no meaning)	

*Free translation:* Some god is talking to me from the other side of the sky.

6. Ka-da-da-bi- noweg coming pretty quickly	kishike sky	notin wind	(yay-hay-yay-hay)
--	----------------	---------------	-------------------

*Free translation:* In a few minutes the wind will be coming from the sky.

7. Ni-bi-wa-ba-dan we come to see		e-dah-nah-gi-ia-ban where I used to live
Mi-ki-nin-oma that is where	agig on earth	oda-na-gi-ia-ban where I used to live

*Free translation:* We come to see where I used to live; and there on earth that is where I used to live. (This is what the medicine god is saying to the medicine man.)

As actually sung the above, was arranged as follows:

1. Ni-ka-gi-na ni-o-ka-na-gi-mi-kog manitog, yay-hay-yay-hay.
2. Mi-si-we ma-ni-tok ni-sha-we-ni-mi-kog ka-gi-na man-i-tok nisha-we-ni-mi-kog, yay-hay-yay-hay.
3. Me-dwe-na-na-go-mi-te a-wa-si-ki-go-ge o-bi-gwen manito, yay-hay-yay-hay.

4. Ni-bi-wa-ba-dan e-da-na-gi-ia-ban mi-ki-nin-o-ma a-gig e-da-na-gi-ia-ban, yay-hay-yay-hay.

5. Ni-ka-gi-na ni-ki-o-na-gi-mi-gog man-i-tog ki-wi-da-gi-shig oge e-ei-i-na-bit, yay-hay-yay-hay.

(And so on.)

Song 22: Kinebigwashgwenagamon  
or Snake Song

1. Ish-go-te-wa-ne ni-ia-we  
fire inside me (*or just me*)

2. Shi-shi-gwen-wa-ne ni-ia-we  
soul inside me (*or just me*)

*Free translation:* There is fire within me. My soul [is] within me.

3. Ni-ia-we wa-ba-dan  
me look, see

*Free translation:* Look at me and see.

4. Ni-ka-nag ni-wi-to-ka-wa-ke ka-gi-na  
all

Ni-te-wa-ke ni-wi-to-ba-nag  
medicine men eating

5. Da-o-na-gi-shi-ne ki-mi-sho-mi-si-nan  
somebody swoons my mother's father

O-to-bwa-ga-na-ne da-ona-gi-sin oto-na-ga-ne  
five smoking some put down dishes five

*Explanation:* In this act the novitiate is "overcome" by the strong medicine "shot" into his person from the medicine bags, the same entering his heart, and he falls in a swoon. His mother's father (or some other relative) then comes and lifts him up and he is prayed over. The five leading medicine men then take a smoke and the five plates of soup are set out for them.

6. Wa-na-ni-ka-na e-ti-ia-ne-i  
partner not sick

*Explanation:* The novitiate is now no longer sick. He is now past the pretended sick stage in the performance.

7. Ki-wi a-ia-dji-mi-go mi-ka-ne  
somebody is talking [to] my partner

Ki-wi-wa-wa-ban-ni-go ni-ka-ne  
somebody sees [my] partner

*Free translation:* Some medicine man is talking to the novitiate. Some one is also paying attention to him so that he will learn the lodge ceremonies properly.

8. Ni-ia-a-dji-mi-go ni-ga-ne ni-gi-ne-bi-gwa-ian  
somebody takes [to] partner snake skin medicine bag

Na-no-te-a-go-wet                      ni-ka-ne  
not much talking [to]                      partner

*Free translation:* Somebody takes the ceremonial snake skin medicine bag and presents it to the novitiate; he, however, talks but little to the novitiate.

9. Ka-bi-ni-dji-wa-no-kwen                      ki-ni-bin  
[like] running                      water

10. Win-sa-ka-ne-we-na                      ma-ga-te-shi-shi  
somebody takes                      black snake's tail

Kwe-wa                      wi-sa-ga-bi-te-na-wi  
teeth                      somebody takes

*Free translation:* Somebody takes the skin [of the black snake] by the tail; and somebody [takes it by] the teeth [in the performance].

11. Ia-a-wi                      shi-shi-gwe-wa                      o-ni-dje-ni-san  
?                      big snake                      little snakes (eggs)

Ni-ki-ga-da-me-shi-ma  
inside

*Explanation:* In this act the medicine actor exhibits a big snake skin as he offers up a prayer in behalf of the novitiate, which means: "May your offspring increase upon the earth as the snake's does, and may you have power, both charm and cunning, as the black snake has."

Song 23: By Tom Farmer—Wabeno Wagamon (Wabeno Song)

Each of the following parts is sung over from two to ten times:

1. In-ni-gwan-ni-sa                      ka-no-da-we                      wi-i-wi-wi  
my brother-in-law                      hears me                      (no meaning)

In-ni-gwa-ni-sa                      ka-no-ba-min                      wi-i-wi-i  
my brother-in-law                      sees me                      (no meaning)

2. Be-ba-mi-dje-wak                      ki-dji-ga-mi-we  
floating                      ocean

Be-ba-mi-bo-got                      ki-dji-mi-ki-nag  
floating                      turtle  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

3. A-ia-a                      gi-dah-i-sa-ga-dji-we  
coming                      hill

A-ia-a                      gi-dah-i-sa-ga-dji-we  
coming                      hill  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

4. O-na-ma                      in-dah-wah-aish-gwe-                      mi-ki-oti-na  
?                      ga-mi-gag                      the land  
I got [it] the edge [of]

5. Io-o                      gi-dji                      i-shgote                      io-o                      madji                      ishgote  
?                      big                      fire                      ?                      bad                      fire

6. O-na-to-ne-wag		a-do-ne-wag	
shooting I am		looking, I am	
7. Wa-sa	wa-sa	in-da-na-to-ma-a	we-si
far	far	want them to come	animals
Ke-ka-me-wa-go-ka-net	be-sho		be-sho
with long legs	a little way		a little way
Ni-do-o-to-ma	me-got-te-wi-sit		aw-e-si
packing	black		animals
• 8. O-dji-da	o-dji-da	ni-mi-ga-wa	a-we-si
I can	I can	find	animals
	* * *	* * *	* * *

*Explanation:* The parts of the song are explained as follows:

1. "My brother-in-law (the daylight) hears me. My brother-in-law (the daylight) sees me." The medicine men imagine that Daylight is a person and is listening to their supplications.

2. "Floating ocean" means the water that surrounds the land; "floating turtle" means the land surface of the earth. The waters of the earth are believed to be flowing about on the upper side of the "earth-plate" mentioned above (see p. 336), and in this great sea is the land surface of the earth floating about like a huge turtle's back sticking above the water. The stanza means: "I see the floating ocean. I see the floating turtle" (that is, the land surface of the earth). The medicine man sees this in his mind's eye, in his imagination as he delves in song. These also hear him in his supplications, he believes.

3. "Coming hill, coming hill." This means that somebody (a manido) is coming up the hill.

4. "I use [it] the edge of the land, bad medicine" or, "bad medicine, I use it, edge of the land." A long time ago the Indians had a bad medicine man and bad medicine; and the medicine man is singing to keep this medicine man and his medicine off the edge of the earth. Freely rendered it would be "I use this (his medicine) to keep the bad medicine man and his medicine off of the edge of the earth."

5. "Big fire; bad fire." This means: "I see a big fire. I see a bad fire." The medicine man here refers to the blazing comet or meteor that crosses the sky. He may have seen the actual comet, or it may have been only a product of his imagination, but with the Indian, as with many white people, a comet is an omen of evil, and the Indian used "medicine" to keep it from harming the earth.

6. "I am shouting. I am looking." Here the medicine man is shouting and hallooing and looking to get the attention of the Wabeno manido (the god of the morning). He acts this out just like a person looking for some one who is lost.

7. "Far, far, want them to come, animals with long legs, a little way, packing black animals." Freely translated this is: "I want some [spiritual] animals to come from a long way off. [I want them also to be] black animals with packs on their backs." This is the prayer the medicine man is repeating

to his manido after he has found him (in the 6th stanza). In the next stanza he finds the animals sought.

8. "I can, I can find black animals, black animals." That is, "I am able to find, I tell [you people], I am able to find the animals, the pack animals [I prayed for]." The pack animals are the pack animals of the manido and are bringing presents to the people, trade articles, plenty of fish, plenty of serial crops and berries, plenty of fur, plenty of game, and increase of the human family.

Song 24: By J. K. Redbird

Ya-hay- ah-a-hay ya-hay ah-a-hay ya-hay ah-a-hay  
 We are to have a dance for the visitors that come. (Repeat.)  
 Ay-hyah-ay ay-hyah-ay ay-hyah-ay yah-ay hay-ah ay-yah-hay  
 Ay-he-yah ay-yah-hah ay-yah-hah ay-yah-hay. (Repeat.)  
 Ay-hah ah he-yah hay hay ah-oh  
 Yah-hah ah he-yah hay-hay-ah-oh (Repeat four times.)  
 Yay-yah ay-hah hay yoh hay-hay-o.

Song 25: O-ka-be-ke-shig mi-te-nag-a-mon

(All Day's (Singing) Medicine Song)

1. Bi-da-sa-mo-se                      ma-ne-to-wi-da                      o-da-sa-mo-se  
 somebody seen coming    god like                      coming down here

*Free translation:* There is seen coming somebody god-like in appearance. This somebody is coming here.

2. Bas-to-se-ian    ni-kan  
 me-see coming    friend  
 We-dji-mo-ka-age                      man-e-to    wi-ka-mi-gok  
 sun [coming up]                      god's    wigwam<sup>9</sup>

*Free translation:* My friend, I see the sun coming up over the wigwam of the manido.

3. Wi-na                      ni-ga-na    be-ma-o-ian    me-te-wig-a-na  
 my                      friend    try    medicine wigwam

*Free translation:* My brother (friend), try to join the medicine lodge.

4. Ka-wa-ba-min    ke-bi-i-ni-go-ne-ia-ne  
 see you    like the light coming

- I-to-nik    i-to-nik  
 mouth    mouth

*Free translation:* I see you as I would see a light coming from your mouth. (Not very clear but seems to mean, "I see you as distinctly as I would see a light through a window.")

5. Shi-ma-da-gwa    dji-mi-mo-si-an  
 bear    walking

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<sup>9</sup> God's wigwam (wigwam of the manido *also* medicine lodge).



lodge or Grand Medicine Lodge (Society), so that the reader will get a clear idea of the meaning of the above songs.

THE GRAND MEDICINE LODGE SOCIETY (MITAWIT,  
MIDEWI, OR MIDEWIWIN)

The actors in this Grand Medicine order are mystery men (*mide*) or medicine men. Their profession is incantation, exorcism of demons, and the administration of shamanistic or magic remedies.

As is indicated in the name, the order is an organized society. It is graded into four separate and distinct common degrees, and at Nett Lake four special degrees have been added, making eight in all. Both sexes are admitted to it. Admission to membership in the degrees is considered of great importance and consequently is difficult and is preceded and followed by elaborate ceremonies. As a rule, a male candidate is one who has been selected for that distinction by the presiding medicine man at the "giving a name" or birth ceremonies of that respective person, the medicine man then assuming the office of god-father for the child. From that date on the parents of the boy gather presents to defray the expenses of his preliminary instruction by a selected medicine man when he reaches the age of puberty, to pay for the feasts given to all who attend the initiation ceremonies, and to furnish the required presents to the medicine men on that occasion.

Obtaining a degree often involves a candidate hopelessly in debt. Should he fail to liquidate the same, his relatives are expected to assume the responsibility thus incurred. The writer has known Bois Fort Indians to live in a starving condition for years, so that a member of the family could take one of these degrees. One aged, indigent woman at Pelican Point (Orr, Minnesota), had saved (starved), it is said, for thirteen years so that she could take the fourth degree before she died, so great was her desire to become an acknowledged medicine woman.

In this society, as maintained at Nett Lake, there are preserved the traditions relating to cosmogony and the genesis of mankind.

It also teaches that an anthropomorphic deity appeared on earth in the long ago and interceded between Che-manido (Kitshi

Manido) and the Indians. He taught the latter the means where-with they might provide themselves with the good things of earth and the power of warding off sickness and death. He gave to the Indians the various plants and instructed them in their uses.

This being is known by the name of Manabush (Manibusr *or* Minaboza). The account of his life on earth, what he did for men, and the rites and ceremonies alleged to have been prescribed by him are dramatically rehearsed at the initiation of a candidate into the society.

The society holds its services in a long, loose wigwam, called "medawegaun." Some of these are ten feet high, a hundred feet long, and twenty feet wide. The framework is complete, but the bark or canvas cover usually extends only half way up the sides, the top being open; sometimes the upper framework is also omitted. Along the center of this house, running the long way of the same within the framework, a pole, supported by posts, carries the presents the initiate is to give to the medicine chiefs.

When dancing, they proceed in a continuous row from left to right around the center pole and its presents, giving them the appearance of dancing in two rows. They all carry animal skin medicine bags as they dance, and as they pass the initiate they shake these over him or at him uttering hoarse sounds of various kinds. Also, when setting out from the eastern or starting post in the eastern end of the lodge, each one utters a hoarse "Ho, ho, ho," or other guttural expression as he shakes his medicine bag, holding it in both hands in front of him with its head pointing westward. Only members of the society are admitted, but any one who wishes may look on at the ceremony from without the hall.

Four of the medicine men act as initiating officers. These are provided with drums and rattles. One of these also has a kona-pamik (or cowry) shell (*Cyprae moneta*), the sacred emblem of the Metawit (medicine lodge order), and as he shakes the rattle and sings in a guttural voice he runs the lodge-dance course around the center pole, followed by the other medicine men. As they thus proceed they pass the novitiate who is seated on a new mat so as to face the center pole of the lodge. One after the other dances

about him (the novitiate) in turn, singing and gesticulating the initiation songs. As a final act they "shoot" him with the sacred konapamik shells, pretending to blow them into his head or breast, whereat he falls as if dead and lies in an apparently lifeless stupor. Quickly the medicine fraternity gather around him, manipulate and rub him with the medicine bags and pray and utter incantations over him till he "recovers," after which he spits a sacred shell from his mouth, pretending it is the one with which the medicine man had "shot" (or pretended to "shoot") him; but which he had previously concealed for the act in his mouth. As soon as he has spit up the shell, he sits upright and later, rising, is given a medicine bag as his lodge badge. This concludes the essentials of the ceremony.

The distribution of the presents follows this act.

The Nett Lake Indians also have a ghost society, which is a variation of the Grand Medicine Lodge, the ceremony being to all appearances about the same as that of the Grand Medicine Lodge proper.

Should any person, who has been set apart by the medicine priest to be dedicated to the Medicine lodge, die before the time set for the initiation, provided he is an adult, the relatives announce the fact to the chief medicine men at a specially called meeting (feast) at the lodge of one of the mourners. After the proper preparation thereafter, the chief mourner is initiated into the society as a substitute for the deceased, and the feast he gives is the "feast of the dead." The whole ceremony, including the feast, is designed to release the deceased's "shadow" from the "shades" and permit it to depart to the "land of mysteries in the happy hunting ground."

After the death of twenty-two infants from cholera infantum in the fall of 1913, we had a ghost ceremony almost weekly till I left the region the next year. Also, since the infantile mortality has increased, children are initiated into the society either in person or by proxy.

Another case of initiation by proxy is when a sick youth is brought to the ceremonial structure for restoration to health as a last resort, all the other and ordinary efforts of the shamans to

cure the patient with exorcisms and incantations having proved futile. Sessions of the society are also held for the sole purpose of curing the sick. This mode of doctoring is, in fact, becoming more popular every year.

KAYENTA, ARIZONA





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